

DRAM 5331: Acting Shakespeare

Instructor: Ray Paolino

Associate Professor

3 Credit Hours

Time: TR 2:00-4:45 PM

Room: Fine Arts Building 352

Semester: Fall 2009

Office: Fine Arts Building Room #366, 706-542-2085

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Office Hours: M 9:00-10:00; T 4:45-5:30; W 9:45-10:45

Course Description: Designed to develop the actor's skills through the intensive study and performance of scenes from Shakespeare or verse drama, this course will emphasize handling heightened language with believable, appropriate characterization, and with physical vibrancy.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop the student's ability to achieve the verbal, physical and emotional "size" necessary for Shakespearean performance.
2. To develop the knowledge, attitude and skills necessary for making verse the "natural" language of the character.
3. To develop scansion abilities with regard to particular roles.
4. To continue reinforcement of the principle of actor "belief" through character objective/intention.

Required Texts:

The Riverside Shakespeare. (Complete works) 1997 edition.

VIDEO: Periodic viewing of John Barton and the RSC's "Playing Shakespeare."

Shakespearean Performances on Video

Various Handouts available online or by Xerox packet

Major Assignments:

1. Presentation of one sonnet and two monologues.
2. Presentation of two or three Shakespearean scenes.
 - a. First scene (tragedy) selected from **Hamlet, Macbeth, Richard III, Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet.**
 - b. Second scene (comedy) selected from **Twelfth Night, As You Like It, Taming of the Shrew, Much Ado About Nothing, Comedy of Errors.**
 - c. Third scene: Your Choice.
3. Scansion assignments of the sonnet and two monologues.
4. Response paper on the acting in a professional production, Shakespeare Tavern (Sept-Nov)
5. Testing and quizzes over the required reading material.
6. Participation in class exercises, reports, discussions, minor performance assignments and attendance.
7. Attend all three University Theatre productions of **Our Lady of 121st Street, Grapes of Wrath, Eurydice.**

General Notes:

1. Acting is a Discipline!
2. Three absences will lower your final grade one full letter; each additional absence will lower your grade another full letter. Two latenesses count as one absence. Once roll has been taken and the work or warm-up begins you will be accounted late. There are **NO** excused absences unless the instructor finds extraordinary circumstances. This is a participatory, studio class.

3. **NEVER** miss class when a performance assignment is due; you will receive a “zero” for that assignment and will not be allowed to make it up.
4. Make up work is allowed **only** under extraordinary circumstances and through the student’s initiative.
5. Do not miss rehearsals with your partner; be respectful of other people’s time. Be available.
6. Wear clothing suitable for movement and floor work. You will not be allowed to participate and receive an absence if not dressed suitably for work.
7. Absence is permitted for religious holiday with advance notice.
8. Assignments are due on the date listed.
9. The nature of Acting and this course requires that physical contact occur from time to time with fellow students. On occasion, I may have to adjust parts of your body for proper alignment and to release tension. Please see me privately as soon as possible if this presents a problem.
10. If you have a learning disability or physical injury that hinders you from participating in class activities please see me privately so we can make arrangements to accommodate you.
11. **Absolutely no food or drinks** will be permitted in the space at any time. Lunch and snacks must remain outside the space. When we take a short break, this will be your opportunity to drink or use the restroom. No newspapers, outside reading or additional clutter will be permitted in the space, whether you are on your feet working or observing the work of others. We will keep the space neat, clean, organized and free of clutter, as this will reflect upon the work we conduct, which should be elevated to a degree of distinct purpose, reaching towards high art.
12. All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.
13. All written work assigned for outside class must be typed. Exceptions will not be permitted and work not typed will not be accepted by the instructor.
14. Extra credit will be given for acting in scenes for the Directing Class (DRAM 5600)
15. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Grading Criteria:

- A—Excellent. Always well prepared; extensive outside preparation. Actively pursues improvement and highly self motivated. Student makes significant growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Active, positive contributor to class. Punctual, always present.
- B—Good to Excellent. Always prepared; notable outside preparation. Pursues improvement and self motivated. Notable growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Positive contributor to class. Punctual, always present.
- C---Acceptable to Good. Generally prepared; acceptable outside preparation. Interested in improvement and often self motivated. Shows some growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Often contributes to class. Punctual, always present.
- D---(Failing for Majors) Unacceptable to Acceptable. Often not prepared; shows little outside preparation. Shows little interest in improvement and is rarely self motivated. Very little skill and knowledge growth during semester. Seldom contributes to class and has negative attitude. Sometimes late; some absences.
- F---Largely Unacceptable. Rarely prepared and lacks adequate outside preparation. Virtually no interest in self improvement and not motivated. Virtually no growth in skills and knowledge. Does not contribute to class; negative attitude. Not punctual; several absences.

Grading Breakdown:

Scenes (2 or 3)	225 points
Two monologues	50
Mid Term Exam	75
Sonnet	25
Quizzes	25
Paper	25

Participation, Exercises, Attendance, etc.	75
TOTAL	500

460-500= A
450-459= A-
440-449= B+
410-439= B
400-409= B-
390-399= C+
360-389= C
350-359= C-
300-349= D
299 or below = F

Scenes/Performances: *Will be graded on a numerical scale of 75 points (or 112.5) each according to the following criteria:*

- Level of preparation and rehearsal
- Ability to determine and play a Goal/Intention/Objective
- Ability to work off, connect and cooperate with scene partner
- Ability to effectively use heightened language and/or verse
- Use of the necessary physical size for the material
- Competency in understanding the “Givens” and manifesting story through language and behavior
- Overall growth and improvement

Regardless of what response the class gives (or your friends give), the instructor is solely responsible for assigning your grade and using the above criteria, will assess your work and grade it accordingly. Your own subjective feelings about your performance are not germane to the grade you receive from the instructor.

Class Participation: Will be numerically based on a maximum of 75 points based on your attendance, attitude in class, oral participation, punctuality, preparation, commitment to class exercises, positive contributions and your ability to work with the ensemble.

Exams: Cover text readings, lectures (take notes), class discussions, exercises and possibly scripts using a format of true/false, definitions or explanations, and essays. Please bring paper for all exams and quizzes.